

## Etymology

Tuesday, July 08, 1980

Ro Isla it Buruanga

Boracay – History & Origin of its name

Isla de Boracay, Malay, Aclan

The origin of this tropical resort's name captures some interest.

Many would say that Boracay was derived from the word borac, a local term which means cotton. Either cotton used to grow in this island in large quantities, or its powdery white sands had something to do with it.

Another is that the name dates back to the time when Spaniards came ashore and picked up shells. Meeting with the Atis later, the Spaniards were told that Sigay is the name of those shells. When the Spaniards ask the Atis were planting, they were told boray, a certain vegetable seed. From boray and sigay came the name Boracay.

Other accounts would say that Boracay was from the native term boay meaning vegetable seeds. It was said that Aeta tribes in the past used to plant vegetables within the island.

Some would also claim that the island was named in part from the word sigay, a type of

seashell (could this be the rare puka shell?)

Finally, documented origin would reveal that Boracay originated from the word "*bora*" or bubbles. It is because of the foamy appearance that the waves make when it softly crashes onto the whitish sands. No less than the natives themselves said that as far in time as their memory as one of the original settlers and natives of Malay and Buruanga, the island which is now known as "Boracay" had no name before until a couple blurted out of their personal conversation about the froath and foam of the oceans of boracay. Malay was a part of Buruang or was only a barrio or barangay of the municipality of Buruanga, and people merely called the place "*Ro Isla it Buruanga*". The name "Boracay" was first given to a very tiny island off the northern tip of the "Isla" by a native upon hearing conversation between a couple, now known to be the Father and Greener of the island of Boracay - Lamberto Tirol and his wife Sofia Ner Gonzales.

Folks have it told that many years ago, the couple came to settle at the northern coast of the "Isla" now known as Yapak, as Yapak was a barrio discovered by Lamberto himself, to engage in planting coconut trees, corns, crops and selling tobacco leaves as their means of livelihood.

A mananggete (tuba-gatherer) was approaching the couple when he overheard a conversation between the couple at their dwelling. Lamberto was at the beach or in the beach water as he observed thick froath being washed ashore by the waves that clased between the tiny island and the "Isla" agitated by the Amihan wind.

Observing this thick froath, he called out to Sofia and said "Acay, hanggod ka bora, Acay," which when translated can mean: "Darling, there's plenty of froath, Darling."

Perhaps this is the origin of Boracay, derived from "Bora. Acay", as heard by the mananggete, which name stuck for the tiny island. Much later, the name was given to the bigger island instead of calling it

"Ro Isla it Buruanga."

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Original Text found: 1912

